

Message Text

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71

ACTION ARA-10

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P R 261800Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4044

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY

USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 3608

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, ES, HO

SUBJ: CENTRAL AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' VISIT TO TEGUCIGALPA

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 3598 (DTG 240110Z JULY 76)

1. THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF GUATEMALA, COSTA RICA, AND NICARAGUA MET IN MANAGUA ON JULY 24 ACTING AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GUARANTOR COUNTRIES OF THE SAN JOSE PROTOCOL OF JULY 4, 1970. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO SEEK A SOLUTION TO THE RECENT BORDER INCIDENTS BETWEEN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR. THE THREE FONMINS DECIDED TO TRAVEL TO BOTH TEGUCIGALPA AND SAN SALVADOR.

2. THE FONMINS ARRIVED IN TEGUCIGALPA ON JULY 25 AND WERE MET AT THE AIRPORT DC HONDURAN FONMIN PALMA GALVEZ. HE ACCOMPANIED THEM TO THE HONDURAN AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS WHERE THEY MET FOR SEVERAL HOURS WITH CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR, PALMA GALVEZ AND HONDURAN ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, LT.COL. CESAR ELVIR SIERRA, AS WELL AS OTHER MILITARY COMMANDERS.

3. FOLLOWING THE MEETING, THE FONMINS HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE, WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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FONMIN MONTIEL OF NICARAGUA ACTING AS THE SPOKESMAN. MONTIEL

STATED THAT THEY HAD RECEIVED A FULL BRIEFING ON THE MILITARY SITUATION AND THAT THEY LEFT THE MEETING REASSURED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER BORDER INCIDENTS. HE STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THEIR MISSION WAS NOT TO SOLVE THE BASIC PROBLEMS DIVIDING HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR BUT RATHER TO DEAL WITH THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF AVOIDING FURTHER BORDER CLASHES. MONTIEL ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE THREE FONMINS WOULD TRAVEL TO SAN SALVADOR ON JULY 26 TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT MOLINA AND THE SALVADORAN CHIEF OF STAFF. MONTIEL SAID THE POSSIBILITY OF STATIONING TROOPS FROM THE THREE COUNTRIES ALONG THE DISPUTED SECTIONS OF THE BORDER HAD BEEN CONSIDERED BUT THAT NOTHING HAD BEEN DECIDED. ASKED WHAT POSITION THE THREE COUNTRIES WOULD TAKE IN THE EVENT OF ANOTHER WAR WITH EL SALVADOR, MONTIEL SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO EVEN CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY. HE FELT SURE THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD BE ABLE TO ARRIVE AT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THEIR DIFFERENCES. FONMIN MOLINA ORANTES OF GUATEMALA STATED THAT THE OBJECT OF THEIR MISSION WAS NOT TO BLAME EITHER COUNTRY FOR THE RECENT INCIDENTS BUT RATHER TO AVOID FURTHER INCIDENTS.

4. HONDURAN FONMIN PALLADBALVEZ SAID THAT THE MEETING HAD OPENED WITH AN EXPLANATION OF HONDURAS' PEACEFUL INTENT AND ITS DESIRE TO ARRIVE AT A PEACE ACCORD WITH EL SALVADOR. HE ALSO SAID THAT THERE WERE TWO PROBLEMS INVOLVED: THE FIRST TO AVOID FURTHER CLASHES ON THE BORDER, AND THE SECOND TO ARRIVE AT A "GLOBAL AND SIMULTANEOUS" PEACE AGREEMENT WITH EL SALVADOR. ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF ELVIR SIERRA SAID THAT THE PROBLEM WAS ONLY IN THE DISPUTED AREAS OF THE BORDER AND AROSE FROM OVERLAPPING MILITARY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THOSE AREAS.

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